PART THREE

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AN AUTOMOBILE TOUR

TALK WITH A MAN WHO PLANS A TRIP AROUND THE WORLD.

Will Start from London, Cross Europe and Asia, then the American Continent.

A VERY ELABORATE MACHINE

EQUIPPED WITH EVERY CONVENIENCE FOR LONG JOURNEY.

Anticipations Both of Pleasure and of Mishaps, but Well Prepared for Emergencies.

Correspondence of the Indianapolis Journal.

LONDON, April 15.

[Your correspondent met Mr. Max Cudell, C. E., on the eve of his departure in the automobile "Passpartout" on a contemplated tour around the world. The following details about the extraordinary undertaking were obtained from him.]

No doubt Lehwess and myself and "Passpartout" will have a successful journey, but whether the programme can be carried out to its fullest extent and in every detail depends on luck, accident and the political situation.

My partner on the trip around the world, Ed C. Lehwess, doctor of law and philosophy, is, like myself, an all-around sport, and knows more about automobiling than most other people. Besides the principals we will carry a couple of attendants, one of whom is an expect chaffeur. Maybe, too, that we shall take a third partner at some point on our journey; we have room enough to accommodate one or two more.

Passpartout, especially built for the trip around the world, is a benzine motor, probably the strongest ever constructed, certainly the strongest now before the public. I can well remember old Gottlieb Daimler, the father of automobiling. Ah, if the old man had only lived long enough to see how we improved on his invention! He would not recognize his own child.

The motor has twenty-five horse power and is constructed on the old Daimler principle, all except the box part. That is patterned after a Pullman sleeper and dining car combined, and very comfortable, indeed. We can make up four beds as good as any traveling between New York and Chicago or San Francisco. In daytime the car can be turned into a chartroom, parlor and kitchen. We carry the most improved cooking furniture got up by inventive Americans, and expect to knock out some good meals, no matter where we are. Of course, we will take along a full line of eatables of every description. Meat we shall buy on route in the old world at least, for, as you may know, the beef trust does not control Europe and Asia. As we expect to meet with some awful drinking water on the way, we also have splendid filtering facilities. Of course, we would like to carry ice, but that may prove impossible.

SIZE OF THE WAGON.

The automobile is a little over thirteen feet long by six broad. The roof is very strongly constructed and may be used for storage purposes. Every half-inch of room is properly utilized. In the space under the benches and couches, for instance, where the beds will be made up at night, our very elaborate photographic and scientific apparatus is stored, besides a little arsenal of firearms, tents and camping-out utensils. Below these necessaries are reservoirs for five-hundred litres of benzine.

The enormous reservoirs will allow us to proceed fully 620 miles without stopping, if we choose, but, while seeming extraordinarily large for Europe, in Asia they are a necessity. Reflect that we hope to traverse the great Desert of Gobi, there to visit some of the ancient buried cities discovered by Sven Hedin. The Swedish explorer nearly famished from thirst, or died of weariness, in the region of eternal sand that seems to contain only two distinct necessaries of life—water in the form of ice and salt—plenty of salt. Whatever may happen to us, we shall not famish, I think.

We shall depend on the traditional ship of the desert but to a limited extent—namely, to carry benzine and other stores for us to the several oases we touch at.

This service is arranged beforehand by one of the greatest Moscow export firms that knows Asia like its own pocket, controlling thousands of men and animals, in fact the greater number of caravans in these latitudes. The Moscow people are in a position to ship ahead of us any quantity of tools, supplementary parts and stores of all kinds to meet us at any point on the road. This is the most expensive part of the undertaking, as we must be prepared for the worst and anticipate all sorts of accidents to ourselves and machine. Our Russian friends, luckily, have the best of connections by rail, ship, caravan, scout and carriers, so it seems well nigh impossible that we should get left for the want of necessaries of any kind.

While both the roof and the body of the carriage offer valuable space for stores, baskets, fastened to both sides and the rear, will carry a good deal more. As a matter of fact, we need not suffer any wants on our long journey that money can buy, as we have all the room we want and ample facilities for replenishing supplies.

THE ROUTE TO BE TAKEN.

Starting from London we make direct for Dover, there to cross the channel and take the road to Paris. We will remain a few days there—how could we do otherwise? Our next great stopping place will be Brussels—if the revolutionists let us. From Brussels we take the nearest route for Berlin. Immediately on arriving in a city we will drive to the headquarters of the local automobile club to attend to the records of the trip. Of course we will keep the chief records ourselves, but our books are open to automobilists the world over, and we will register whenever we arrive at or leave a place. Each start will be under the supervision of the local automobile club.

Leaving Berlin we will follow the well-traveled road to the Russian frontier, and we are assured that we shall suffer no inconvenience on reaching that point. From Alexandrovo we go direct to Moscow, touching at Warsaw, Brest and Smolensk, the automobile clubs of those cities having promised their assistance, when necessary. This may be of value in a political and personal sense, but guides are hardly needed, no matter where we go, as the German Emperor kindly secured for our use general staff maps of all the countries we intend to pass through. These maps show every river, ditch and mountain, every smallest elevation, besides cities, towns, villages, hamlets and smaller points of vantage. We have studied the charts most carefully, and there is little doubt that we can avoid going astray by using ordinary precaution.

Up to Moscow things will run smoothly; we shall have a regular pleasure trip and make plenty of charming acquaintances, but later on things necessarily assume a more serious aspect, especially after we leave the Sea of Aral behind and enter upon the Ural mountains, forming the boundary between Europe and Asia. But the difficulties this high plateau offers are mere child's play compared with the miserable road to Tcheljabinsk, according to the general staff charts.

We shall have to rough it, zigzag fashion, for several days, or a week, and Passpartout will be put to a severe test. The Ural mountains have no special terrors for a machine like ours—Passpartout will climb them easily, we think.

ENTERING SIBERIA.

Once in Asia, the great Siberian mail route continuing to Irkutsk is open to us. This route, we understand, is about seven miles broad and, though furrowed by a thousand tracks, may yet offer some even space. Doubtless, we will run across many points of vast interest and will likewise astonish the natives to no small extent. None has ever seen an automobile, and even the richest may doubt the reports that such things exist. However, probably the hardest worked member of our party in those latitudes will be the cook, for in the small Siberian towns the fare is both indigestible and scant, white bread, for instance, being not obtainable on the other side of Krasnoyarsk.

In Irkutsk we will have friends, automobile enthusiasts (without automobiles), who look forward to our visit with eager expectations. We will make our bow to the Governor and remain long enough to study that interesting city and its industries. As to provisions on the route, we hope to do a little shooting. The country abounds in wild birds, particularly ducks, and the rivers are full of splendid trout.

At Irkutsk begins the overland journey to Peking. This, it will be remembered, has been accomplished in several weeks, but those rapid travelers were the Czar's couriers, enjoying special facilities by treaty. How long we shall need I cannot conjecture. At any rate, we shall strike the country by the end of May or beginning of June, the best time for traveling, as July and August are intolerably hot in those parts.

But the selection of the route will largely depend on political conditions. If the country is quiet we shall enter China by way of the Baikal lake, a steamer capable of carrying Passpartout being at our disposal, thanks to contract made beforehand. After crossing the lake we shall stop for a brief space of time in the mysterious Chinese-Russian sister cities, Kiakhta and Maimachen, only half a mile or so from the frontier.

When I say we will stop there I don't mean that we will stop in the cities proper, for, according to treaties, foreigners are not permitted to sleep in either. But we will view the great sights, the cathedral, with its massive silver doors, and the wonderful candlesticks ornamented with priceless rubies and emeralds. Passpartout will be stalled on the "neutral ground," a tract of land some two hundred yards wide, between the Russian and Chinese empires. I wonder what the 300-feet yellow frontier posts, set up there by the Son of Heaven, would say of our machine if they had the gift of sight and speech. Think of it! An automobile, and such a one as Passpartout, within the shadow of the great wall of Kalgan, behind which the wives and daughters of the male inhabitants of Maimachen are sheltered, for no woman's foot must ever cross the gate of the queer town, which sends out most of the Chinese tea consumed in Europe.

THE DESERT OF GOBI.

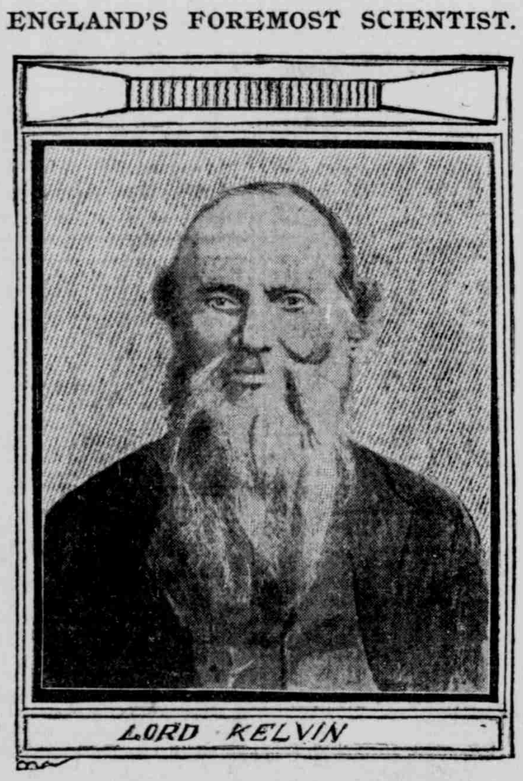
After that—farewell civilization—the Desert of Gobi begins. Of this, too, we have excellent maps, and the several oases where stores are awaiting us will be easily found. I announced in the beginning of this article that we would visit some of the ancient cities dug up by Sven Hedin. I might have been more modest and said: We will try to visit them. Now that Hedin has shown us the way, it ought not to be impossible to reach these old-time outposts of Chinese or Tartar life.

If, however, the political situation in China does not allow safe travel, we will take the longer but more secure route through the valley of the Chilka and Amoor, making direct for Vladivostock.

We expect to go slowly, for we want to see and be seen. Our photographic and scientific apparatus will be in constant use. Whenever possible we shall travel day and night, one of us, either Lehwess or myself, steering. At night the steersman will always be attended by an experienced chaffeur, as already stated. Of course, we carry the very latest American lanterns. Our York. In New York Passpartout will be shelved; thereafter we can get along without.

We expect to be gone thirty weeks, anticipate no serious trouble in any of the countries passed through and hope to bring back rich collections of photographs, surveys and valuable scientific observations.

ENGLAND'S FOREMOST SCIENTIST.



William Thompson, the first Baron Kelvin, is regarded as the greatest of living physicists and scientific inventors. With Lady Kelvin he is now visiting this country. It is his intention to make a study of electrical and other scientific developments in the United States. Lord Kelvin has been professor of philosophy at Glasgow University since 1846. He has acted as electrician in the laying of many submarine cables, and has published numerous books and papers on scientific subjects.

GRANDMOTHER'S CAP BASKET.

"Middle-aged women are fortunate these days," said one of them in a little comfortable chat about the fashions of the times. "Forty odd years ago all women who were nearing the half-century period had to wear caps. My grandmother died long ago, after she was fifty years old. She had worn a cap for a number of years then and I remember that I considered her quite an old-old lady. Wherever she went, on the mild festive occasions which those times afforded, she was always accompanied by her cap basket. Sometimes she carried it herself—it held her knitting also—and sometimes a grandchild, generally a girl, was invited to accompany grandmother when she took tea away from home and carry the cap basket. Among the most pleasant recollections of my childhood are the ceremonious company-teas to which I attended my grandmother. The gilt-banded china, the pear preserves, the lovely biscuit, the cold sliced ham, the tea cakes, or jelly cake, of those simple but eminently genteel entertainments, are a delightful and cherished memory.

"But the caps and the cap basket. The caps were elaborate and expensive structures of lace, tulle—or mull—lavender ribbon and artificial violets, and their construction required the expert hand of the town milliner, though some ladies were deft enough to fashion their own caps. In many oil portraits now in existence these caps are shown. The proper garb for a company-tea of fifty years ago was a handsome black silk frock, surmounted by a very 'dressy' and imposing cap. Some caps had broad ribbon strings; others had tucked strings of the material of the cap. The strings could be tied in a neat bow, or it was also considered genteel to wear them floating. The hair, of course, was worn brushed down in smooth bands over the ears, or behind the ears, a severe style which not many faces could afford in these days; but our grandmothers always looked pretty.

"The cap basket, in order to contain these large and valuable edifices of lace, ribbon and violets, had to be a rather large, broad basket. Generally cap baskets were of willow, sometimes plain, sometimes in fanciful pattern. A stylish cap basket which came from the East was considered quite the elegant thing. Also any woman who had Eastern relatives to send her now and then the very latest things in caps was a highly favored and much envied person. The cap was generally borrowed by intimate friends to be patterned after. When grandmother and I arrived at the company-teas, we always went upstairs before appearing in the parlor. There grandmother removed her bonnet and donned her decorative company cap."

The Superior Method.

Philadelphia Record.

A leading theater manager in Chicago has followed a Boston example and ceased using posters, which were once the main reliance of the theaters for publicity. He maintains that it is far more profitable to put poster money into newspaper space. It is the opinion of observing men that eventually newspaper advertising will be virtually the exclusive means of publicity.

A RUINOUS EARTHQUAKE

ACCOUNT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF CITY OF SCHEMACHA.

First Direct News by Mail Describing Destruction of This Tartar Town and Its People.

A RACE THROUGH THE DESERT

THE CZAR GAVE A MILLION ROUBLES FOR REBUILDING USES.

Autocratic Government Saves Commercial Credit—Loss of Life and Apathy of Survivors.

Correspondence of the Indianapolis Journal.

ON THE RUINS OF SCHEMACHA, March 31.—The Czar, by his special representative, Prince Obolenski, is trying to bring order out of the chaos into which nature threw this city that was, but progress is slow, frightfully slow. The millions appropriated by Nicholas out of his private purse might save a city of Schemacha's size under ordinary circumstances, but if that city be a vast cemetery and its inhabitants either dead, crazed, wounded or turned fatalists or robbers, even money loses some of its power for good.

Besides, this town of ruins is separated from the nearest point of civilization, Baku, by two days' enforced march through the desert. Every pound of provisions must be carried that distance on camel back, and as I write the cold is intense and big snowflakes, driven by a fierce gale through unglazed window openings, blot out the letters painfully set down with a trembling hand.

We have now twenty barracks going, but most of the survivors are still lodging in tents, under crumbling walls or in the open. Large quantities of logs are shipped to this point, but only part of them can be used for building purposes, as half the population is on the point of freezing to death. The prince, though, who has his "orders," determined to save the city and people for his Czarish Majesty, and, thanks to autocratic methods, he will probably succeed. Americans, having no use for autocracy, may still indorse what autocracy did for stricken Schemacha.

The Emperor's representative has just commanded that no commercial or other debts within the city and district shall be collectable during the next six months, while all merchants are permitted to declare themselves bankrupts without incurring the penalties and annoyances appertaining to that condition.

Their bankruptcy is recorded as "owing to force majeur," and their credit is declared to be as good as ever, while creditors must not ask interest on the amount due for the six months' extension decreed, and money advanced at higher than the legal rate is declared forfeited.

MOSCOW MERCHANTS HARD HIT.

This ukase, which may save Schemacha as a city and commercial center, is particularly hard on Moscow, whose merchants monopolize trade in these parts, but what of that? The Czar chooses to make rich Paul pay poor Peter, and subjects are there to obey.

Even to-day it is impossible to compute the number of dead and wounded or the amount of property destroyed. A census would be useless, as thousands ran away during the first few days after the earthquake. Though I have been here since the beginning of March I have not seen a single person who saved anything besides the clothes on his or her back. An early spring—warm weather—is Schemacha's only hope. Up to the present the ground is frozen so hard that it was impossible to conduct excavations on a larger scale.

Prince Galitzin, Governor of the province, finding me at work on this letter, just asked me to announce positively that the city will be rebuilt. "It's the Czar's will, and his will will be done," declared the plenipotentiary.

The catastrophe was caused by a volcano situated six and one-half miles east of Schemacha. The eruption has not yet ceased and the nights are turned into day by the flames and fiery lava bursting continuously from the crater. The earthquake tore a ditch exactly three-fourths of a mile long, six feet broad and twelve feet deep in the rock and soil half way between the town and the volcano. Official surveyors say it looks as if made by man's hand, for a given purpose, and under the direction of skillful engineers, the same depth and breadth prevailing throughout the break in the earth's surface.

The writer happened to be in the dining room of the Hotel Metropole, at Baku, when the great Tartar town was destroyed. As I was sitting down to luncheon at 12:28, Feb. 13, the building and outlying houses as far as I could see (I was near the window) began to rock to and fro for the period of exactly fifteen seconds. I had my elbows on the table, felt it move away from and return to its position.

When the swaying ceased I was overcome by a dazed feeling, from which I didn't recover until an hour later. Afterwards I learned that the other guests, and likewise the attendants, had had the same experience as I. For a whole hour the great hotel, and the people of Baku generally, fell into a sort of semi-comatose state, business ceased, street cars and wagons stopped in their tracks, the wheels of commerce and machinery stood stock still, or ran wild, according to the way they were affected.

The same evening at 6, while I was talking with a business man in his store, another shock came, but this second one probably lasted no more than eight seconds. It was less forcible, though, the swaying motion being absent. It came by starts and jerks. An hour later telegrams announced that Schemacha had fallen, "a thriving Tartar town of 25,000 inhabitants buried, the Governor with a staff of officials on the way to bring relief."

RELIEF TRAINS START.

Myself and servants immediately started out with fresh horses, a pack train carrying provisions following an hour later. A mile's ride from Baku the desert commences—ground torn and cracked by the eternal dryness, here and there white bones, the remains of camels and horses, and men perhaps; dried up salt pools and lakes to the right and left, little or no vegetation, naked rocks and sand, sand and again sand.

After covering some thirty miles we caught up with the first relief caravan, carrying bread. The train was escorted by Cossacks, whose commander ordered me to fall behind. We rested for two hours in the village of Dschengin, but were unable to procure fresh horses. The night we spent at Marasan, a colony of Malakane sectarians banished to this the most barren portion of the Caucasus on account of their opposition to the Orthodox Church. These people were camping out, their houses and barns being in ruins, and we had no sooner lain down in the sand to sleep when a third earthquake struck the neighborhood, lasting eight seconds.

Next morning, when about two miles from the stricken city, we outdistanced the Governor's own caravan, and further on came upon a troop of Tartar scouts, who, hands on their long, shining stillettos, demanded provisions. We introduced ourselves as the Governor's avant guard, saying that his Excellency was hastening to the rescue with two relief trains. Thereupon they turned their horses and rode away at breakneck speed. I never saw such horsemanship—rocks and ditches did not seem to exist for these Tartars.

Another half "verst" and Schemacha was lying before us. The town is, or was, built on a number of low, sloping hills, skirted by a mountain range; in the distance begins the region of eternal snow. The air was soft, the sun shining, oppressive silence all around. Now a breeze wafted most a pestilential smell into our faces, the odor of decaying flesh, of burning bodies—it was awful enough to make us draw rein at one accord and consult whether it would not be best to return. But love of adventure, curiosity, prevailed and we continued on the road towards the river.

There a horrible sight met our eyes. Both river embankments are strewn with dead bodies. Thousands of animals, horses, donkeys, goats, sheep, cats and dogs, and hundreds of men, women and children fleeing from the tumbling city got so far and no further. Reaching the supposed haven of security, they fell down in their tracks and the fiery lava upon them. As our startled horses recoiled from the battlefield, a cloud of vultures and smaller birds, crows, I believe, rose up in the air, but soon returned to continue their meal by the side of dogs and foxes. There was no rivalry; there was enough for all.

With aching hearts we rode on until, about a hundred feet from what was once a city gate, the street became impassable for animals, being blocked in the center and hedged in on both sides by ruins, remnants of houses and towers; trees and pavements uprooted; ashes, lava, melted ore and dead bodies of man and beast in wild confusion.

When I say that Schemacha is but a vast cemetery, I am putting it mildly. A cemetery is an orderly place—this is chaos. The population of a cemetery lodges underground, out of sight, that of Schemacha—dead or alive—is in a thousand and one places, buried and unburied, minus head or limbs, suffering or crazed—but always silent.

Ah, this awful silence, this resignation of death! "If they would but speak, would but cry out in agony or wrath," I said to myself over and over again. Their mute distress was horrible to contemplate.

Not a stone left upon stone, not a house, hut or hovel standing; in their stead piles of brick and mortar, of sandstone, granite and beams, red with blood, intermixed with human and animal corpses. Most Schemacha houses were built of very large hewn stone; the roofs, too, were of stone, weighted by more stones. The earthquake literally tore these structures asunder, tumbling all they contained into the cellar, and roof and sidewalls on top. The prince commissioner told me to-day that over 7,000 men, women and children are still buried in the ruins, buried without religious rites, "and so forever excluded from Paradise," think the poor, foolish survivors.

RELIEF MEASURES TAKEN.

I helped to put up the first lazaretto, a miserable barrack of thin boards and "so small," I thought. Yet it proved large enough; there was, in fact, room to spare, for most of those carried by under cover of gaily decorated carpets were beyond help. They had happily escaped the surgeon's knife; happily, I say, for I watched the three sawbones and their assistants at work. They did their best, of course, but their "best" was awful. Outside, eagerly seeking for stray sunbeams, a few men and three or four veiled women waiting to have their wounds cleansed. They must needs wait so long that their wounds ceased to bleed. Certainly, the cold will kill them.

The lazaretto occupies a small clearing in the market place, the "Bazaar," as it is called, where the survivors receive their rations, the men wildly picturesque in turban or lamb-skin cap; the women in torn, Oriental robes, the lower part of their face hidden behind dirty cheesecloth. Now a hundred or more are walking up and down, but you could hear a pin drop. No one speaks, no one cries, no one begs; fatalism struck them dumb, wiped out their sense of self-preservation.

They munch their stale bread and the handful of flour given them, moistening it with their tears, and then return to the only occupation they take an interest in—the recovery of the bodies of loved ones. "Our children and friends are dead, let us save their souls," is the only sentiment that animates these people. They have no tools, no strength, and many are suffering from cruel wounds, but all strive with what little power is left in them to get at the dead; strive and work with bleeding hands, an expression of fierce energy on their brown, blanched faces.

After trying in vain for ten days or more, I obtained this much of a statement from a native: "It was at noon; I stood in front of my house with a friend, talking. Suddenly it grew black before my eyes; the earth shivered under me, one rapid backward movement, one forward; I fell. Soon all was over and my house and my family, my wealth and my native town were no more."

As stated, the number of killed will never be known, all records being destroyed and burials and removals proceeding indiscriminately. The prince commissioner spoke of 8,000 this afternoon; another guessed 15,000. I alone counted some 2,000 dead bodies.

The earthquake occurred while schools and bathhouses were in full swing. Their religion obliges Tartar women to go to the public bathhouse daily, if they have none at home; the bathing places, as well as the schools, were in basements and cellars. Thus it happened that over a thousand women and children were killed while performing their religious or other duties. Help came too late, but it was not man's fault. The officials made all possible haste, but, with the means at their disposal, they could not annihilate distance.

THE FALLEN HAREM.

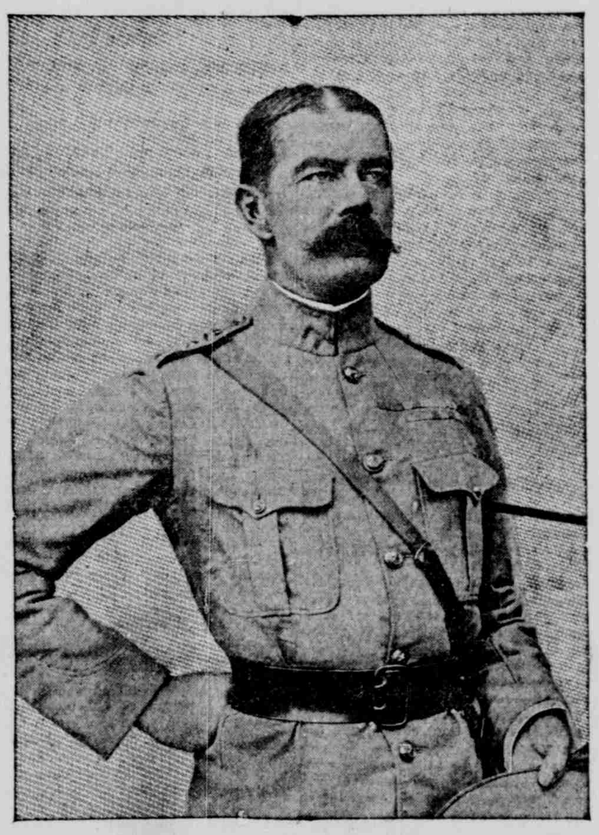
Passing by an old Tartar who was sitting on the ruins of a great stone edifice, I heard him murmur: "Twenty-two, twenty-two." I stopped and inquired, but he only shook his head and repeated the word "twenty-two." From a Russian official I learned that, but a few days ago, this man was the Croesus of the town; his harem, the ruins of which lay before us, contained the finest women in all Tartardom, twenty-five of them, each worth from 500 to 1,000 roubles. The earthquake slew all but three, and—witness the irony of fate—only the least handsome and the oldest of the lot escaped. No wonder the old Tartar strew his hair with ashes.

Besides bread and medicine, the prince commissioner brought large quantities of white muslin or linen. He knows his Tartars and that they would endure starvation rather than lack of proper burial clothes. Tartar coffins are hand-made, with needle and twine; any white woven fabric will do.

On the banks of the river, between the awful carcasses, besides vultures, dogs and greedy crows, veiled women, hundreds of them, kneel and squat, sewing coffin-sacks, or preparing the bodies of their loved ones for burial by a bath in the putrid water. As soon as a body is sewed up, men carry it to the mountain top, where it is set upright, face to the east, all without a word; no cry of agony, only silent sorrow.

I thought I was going mad in this everlasting stillness, in this desert of mute despair. Suddenly, towards evening, roar and clangor of another subterranean battle—noises calculated to frighten all creation. I was pitched to the ground that shivered and trembled under me. When I awoke our horses and the camels of the bread caravan were tearing about madly, bellowing with fright. THEODORE BRANDT.

MAY NOT ATTEND THE CORONATION.



GENERAL LORD KITCHENER.

It is reported in London that General Kitchener will be permitted to leave South Africa long enough to attend the coronation of King Edward. In order to do so it would be necessary for him to sail without delay. In view, however, of the peace negotiations now pending it is improbable that he will leave Pretoria.

Congregation and Audience.

Philadelphia Record.

"Why do we always speak of the congregation of a church and the audience of a theater? Why would it be incongruous to say that the congregation enjoyed the comedy, and equally incongruous to say that the audience relished the sermon?" This question was put to a clergyman the other day, and the good man answered: "The word congregation applies particularly to churches because it is a word deriving from the Latin grex, which means a flock of sheep. The people of a religious organization are always regarded as a flock and their leader is regarded as their shepherd. Thus he is called their pastor, a word taken bodily from the Latin and meaning a shepherd. Sheep are eminently mild, kind and good animals, and to call the members of a church a flock of sheep and the conductor of a church a pastor or shepherd is, therefore, a symbol of high praise. It is too high praised to be applied to any other sort of a collection of people."

OUR TRADE IN MALAYA

IT IS VERY LIGHT, THOUGH THE MARKET IS MOST INVITING.

An Opportunity That Is Greatly Neglected Through Singular Lack of Knowledge.

BRITISH HAVE A MONOPOLY

ASIATICS ARE THE BUYERS AND WOULD WELCOME OUR GOODS.

Practical Information as to Conditions That Should Be of Much Benefit to Americans.

Correspondence of the Indianapolis Journal.

SINGAPORE, March 5.—Sir Frank Swettenham, Governor of the Straits Settlements, in one of his stories on Malay life, tells of a visit to England some years ago in which, in a ride to a meet of hounds, he was joined on the road by a substantial fellow-countryman, who began to quiz him in regard to this colony. The inquirer was surprised to learn that it was not a part of Canada, having supposed it to be another name for the English possession across the Atlantic. When the talk turned on silos, which the elderly man said he was introducing in his trade, and the younger expressed fear that nothing could be done in that line in the Straits, the other said: "Ah, then I am not interested in the place," and quickening his pace, rode on. "This little incident," comments the Governor, "is typical; but it is British not to know, and also British not to wish to know. Perhaps it is as well; too many questions are often trying."

There may yet be many substantial people in England as ill informed as the Governor's friend of other years, although a colony whose trade returns approach £60,000,000 annually, having become the clearing house for Asia, is not so likely now as then to be known there only by name. The incident would seem to typify present American information, however, in regard to this colony. Possibly Americans should not be expected to know much of a region to which trade interests do not attract them. When a letter this week from a prominent New York house suggested that this place might be a station for recruiting trade from China and Mozambique, the recipient scarcely smiled. American letters geographically as deficient have drifted in with the mails for years. It may not be beyond bounds to say that the number of letters that reach here from the United States correctly addressed is smaller than it was fifty years ago, when the Straits Settlements Colony was in its commercial infancy; for early accounts of trade development rank American with British shipping. Decay of the merchant marine resulted nowhere in more serious loss to American shipping than in these waters, for in natural course it would have increased a hundred-fold, as did the shipping of Great Britain, instead of dwindling to a level with that of countries commercially fifth-rate. Without entering into geographical detail, it may be said that the nearest point at which China trade may be touched is at Hong-Kong, 1,800 miles north; that Manila is 1,400 miles northeasterly; that the nearest port in India is yet further westward, and that if this radius were swept around it would include within its teritory tributary to Singapore trade, comprising Sumatra, the Malay peninsula, Siam, Borneo, Java, Celebea and the smaller islands of the Dutch Indies. There has been a civilization of Indian origin between this latitude and that of South China from a remote period, occupying the belt now covered by the French possessions and Siam, and Malays have lived in the peninsula that carries their name for eight or nine centuries; so that a letter addressed to Panama, New York, would not be worse directed than those that come to Singapore, China. The term Straits Settlements is as much a postal entity as China, and the chief towns in the Settlements are Singapore, Penang, Malacca, picketing the Strait of Malaca and dominating 400 miles of the Malay peninsula, which, although under British advice and influence, maintains sovereignties nominally native. Malacca survives as a relic of political folly. Singapore and Penang, both of them islands, stationed like sentinels at the two ends of the strait, 400 miles apart, catch the business. There is little of it, coming or going, from which one or the other of them does not derive some benefit. It all goes into the returns for the colony.

TRADE IN BIG FIGURES.

The figures herewith given are in silver money, worth bullion. Imports last year, exclusive of treasure, reached in dollars 290,394,652, an increase of 35,104,922 over imports of the preceding year. Exports amounted, exclusive of treasure, to 250,916,309 silver dollars, an increase over exports of the preceding year of silver dollars 25,061,795. In that year the harbor returns at San Francisco showed 952 ships in and 914 out, with tonnage respectively of 1,487,816 and 1,408,452. The port of Singapore had in the year four times the tonnage of San Francisco and fifteen times the number of vessels. To this considerable colonial trade the United States is credited with sales from Atlantic ports of merchandise of a silver dollar value of 1,698,396, and from Pacific ports of 176,799. Exports to the United States reached a silver dollar value of 25,998,515 to Atlantic ports, and of 1,040,461 to Pacific ports.

Probably these figures understate the volume of American trade in these ports; but transhipments at Hong-Kong which credit to other flags deliveries here from the Pacific coast are doubtless more than balanced by the New York purchases of Straits tin through London. Thus while the American trade doubtless exceeds 29,000,000 silver dollars, the proportion of imports and exports, if scrutinized to the last degree, would continue to show that Americans buy fifteen times more goods here than they sell; and that naturally and inevitably the bulk of the business with this commercial area must be done through Atlantic ports. High expectations may be justified concerning Pacific coast relations with China, Japan and Australia. Products of that coast, such as flour, canned salmon, fruits and possibly meats, can find in most of those markets, and here also, an ever increasing demand. But manufacturers east of the Rocky Mountains can reach the Atlantic cheaper than they can the Pacific, and steamer freights from Pacific points to destinations beyond Hong-Kong have not yet been able to compete with freights from Atlantic ports to the same points. There has been abundant room so far for